CHAPTER 14

Politics and Power

Learning Objectives

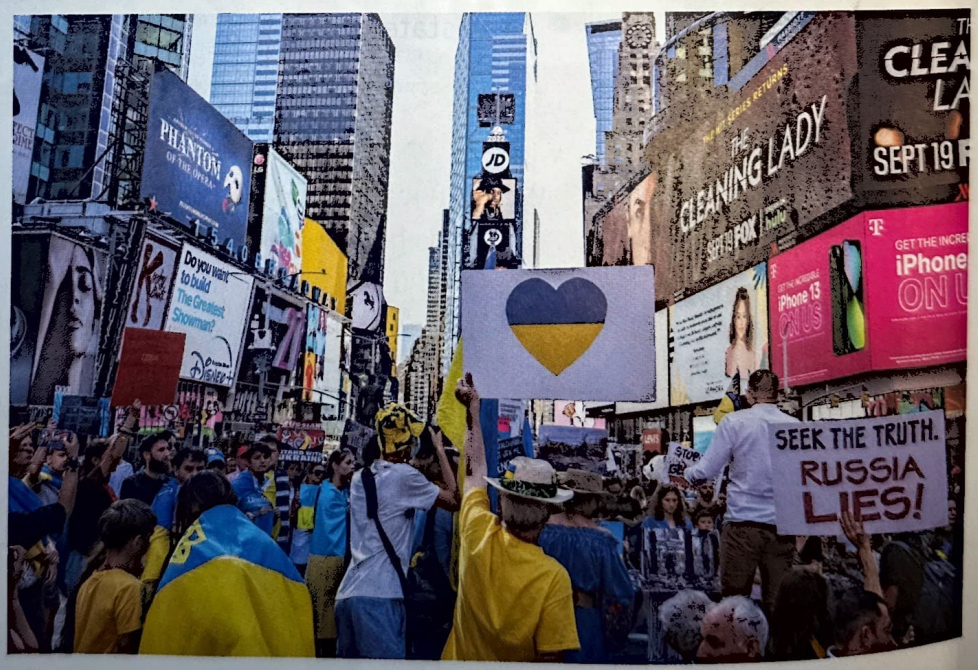
- Describe anthropology's understanding of the origins of politics.
- Define the state from an anthropological perspective.
- Explain key ways globalization is affecting the state.
- Assess the origins of violence and war and their relationships to politics and the state.
- Demonstrate knowledge of ways people mobilize power outside the state's control.

War! What is it good for?

On February 24, 2022, the Russian government, led by President Vladimir Putin, sent nearly 200,000 soldiers to invade Ukraine, unleashing destruction and death in a horrific war with global implications. Ukraine's armed forces resisted fiercely in the face of overwhelming Russian bombardment. They pushed back initial Russian advances on the country's major cities, surprising many in Russia, Europe, and the United States who expected the vaunted Russian military to easily assert its dominance. Still, in those first months, more than 7 million people fled the onslaught for refuge in European countries to Ukraine's west, and as many as one-third of the country's 43 million people were displaced internally. Russian leaders' apparent plan for a quick strike to overthrow the Ukrainian government instead turned into a protracted, brutal, deadly war of attrition focused on eastern Ukraine's mineral- and energy-rich Donbas region.

Nineteen days after Russia invaded Ukraine, Marina Ovsyannikova, a longtime editor and journalist for Russia's state-controlled TV network Channel One, ran uninvited onto the set of a live broadcast. Standing behind the news anchor, she brandished a handwritten sign: "NO WAR. Stop the War. Don't believe propaganda. They are lying to you here." She shouted anti-war slogans for a few moments before the station switched programming. Pro-government Channel One is the main source of news for millions of Russians and has been central to promoting the state's current narrative about its "special military operation" in Ukraine. Ovsyannikova, whose father is Ukrainian and mother is Russian, was arrested for her actions, accused of being a British spy, interrogated, and fined for posting an anti-war online video message. Opposition to war within Russia—apparently widespread, though repressed—broke through the fog of war, at least momentarily.

In this global age, war has global implications. When the United States and members of the European Union placed economic sanctions on Russia with the goal of damaging its economy, the move sent shock waves through the global economy, too—disrupting supply chains of oil and gas, grain, car parts, and even lithium exports essential for the world's green energy transition. Global food and fuel prices skyrocketed. Global hunger increased. Western military contractors, funded by billions of dollars from U.S. and European governments, rushed weapons to Ukraine to arm men ages 18–60 whom the Ukrainian government had banned from leaving the country.



Demonstrators in New York's Time Square rally against Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

As anthropologists, how do we understand the politics of this (or any) war, its origins, and its impact? Why would Russia risk a large-scale war on its borders? For control over natural resources, access to warm-water ports, defense against encroachment from Western military alliances, or a political reunification of ethnic groups sharing cultural, linguistic, religious, and family ties? How did Ukraine, which has been independent of the former Soviet Union for only thirty years, mobilize education, media, legislation, history, and language to consolidate a distinct Ukrainian ethnic identity—an identity now activated in fierce opposition to the Russian invasion?

War is an extreme assertion of political power through violence. But who is it good for? Who wants it? Who decides when war starts? Who decides when war ends?

In 1940, in the midst of World War II, leading anthropologist Margaret Mead explored the roots of war in her essay "Warfare Is Only an Invention—Not a Biological Necessity." Addressing the common assumption that violence and war are essential aspects of human nature, Mead presented compelling ethnographic examples of people who did not go to war to settle disputes. Warfare is not a universal biological imperative, she argued, but rather a choice. Of the various reasons people cite for going to war—land, loot, prestige, honor, women—all can be satisfied without violence. Mead finds war a cultural invention. And a bad one at that. Surely, she ponders, humans must be able to invent a better, less violent way of negotiating power and resolving their differences.

Power is often described as the ability or potential to bring about change through action or influence—either one's own or that of a group or institution. War and violence may receive the most attention, but power—whether openly displayed or carefully avoided—is embedded in all human relationships, from the most mundane aspects of friendships and family relationships to the myriad ways humans organize institutions and the structural frameworks of whole societies (Wolf 1982).

The Greek philosopher Aristotle spoke of humans as political animals. By this he meant that we live with other people in communities through which we strive to organize ourselves to achieve the good life—not as hedonists seeking the maximization of individual pleasure but as a collective partnership (*koinonia*) seeking the good life, virtue, and beauty through community. Politics, then, in its most basic form, is simply the mobilization of people's beliefs into collective action. The presence of politics and power relations in the ebb and flow of daily life is a central focus of anthropological study. Although uprisings, demonstrations, and war may draw attention to the most public, dramatic, and violent aspects of politics, anthropologists

also consider the multiple local forms of politics—the careful political interactions and activities that occupy much of daily life and are essential in making a community a decent place to live (Gledhill 2000; Kurtz 2001; Lewellen 2003).

Throughout this book, we explore power and its intersections with culture. We work to unmask the structures of power built on ideologies of race, gender, ethnicity, and sexuality and the institutions of kinship and religion. We also examine the power dynamics of class stratifications and the world economy. In this chapter, we explore power as it is expressed through political systems and processes: the ways humans have organized themselves in small groups, the role of the state in national and international politics—including war—and the ability of people (nonstate actors) to engage in politics and exercise power through individual actions and social movements outside the direct control of the state. We consider the historical and contemporary approaches that anthropologists have taken toward these crucial issues and the ways in which globalization is shifting the dynamics of power and politics on local and global levels. In particular, we will examine the following questions:

- How have anthropologists viewed the origins of human political history?
- What is the state?
- How is globalization affecting the state?
- What are the relationships among politics, the state, violence, and war?
- How do people mobilize power outside the state's control?

While reading this chapter, you will analyze many expressions of politics and the ways in which aspects of power are expressed locally and globally today. You will consider how political anthropology can help you think more deeply about your own political expressions, including how you negotiate human relationships on the interpersonal, group, community, national, and global levels. You will examine the changing role of the state in local, national, and global affairs. You will also see how humans mobilize collectively through social movements to challenge the power of the state and the effects of globalization by advocating for social change and human rights. Finally, you will consider an anthropological debate about the roots of violence in human culture. The skills you acquire in this chapter will be valuable additions to your toolkit for living as a political actor and an engaged citizen in today's global world.

How Have Anthropologists Viewed the Origins of Human Political History?

» Describe anthropology's understanding of the origins of politics.

Over the course of history, humans have organized themselves politically by using flexible strategies to help their groups survive and to make their communities better places to live. Our earliest human ancestors appear to have evolved in small, mobile, egalitarian groups of hunter-gatherers. Core human characteristics and cultural patterns emerged in these types of groups.

Beginning in the late 1800s, anthropologists studying politics and power focused primarily on small-scale, stateless societies in an attempt to understand human political history through the political activities of contemporary hunter-gatherers, pastoralists, and horticulturalists. But in the 1960s, as nation-states emerged to dominate political activity on a global scale, the anthropological gaze shifted significantly to encompass more complex, state-oriented societies and the processes by which local settings are politically incorporated into a larger context.

The specialized field of *political anthropology* took clear shape after World War II as anthropologists such as Meyer Fortes and E. E. Evans-Pritchard (1940), as well as other British social anthropologists (e.g., Gluckman 1954; Turner 1957), examined local political systems in Africa. Others looked closely at political systems in the Middle East and Asia (Barth 1959; Leach 1954) and among Indigenous peoples of the Americas (Redfield 1941; Wallace 1957). These highly detailed studies of local political systems rarely placed the communities in a larger context—despite being conducted at a time when colonial powers had imposed non-Indigenous governing structures on much of the world.

As anthropologists undertook these studies of politics in many cultures, they attempted to create a common language, a typology that would enable them to communicate across cultural areas and compare and contrast their findings (Gledhill 2000; Lewellen 2003). The political anthropologist Elman Service (1962) classified the vast and varied world of political systems into four basic types: bands, tribes, chiefdoms, and states. Although considered too simplistic by anthropologists today, this framework shaped a previous generation of anthropological thinking about political systems. Service proposed that political systems develop through a natural, evolutionary progression from simple to complex and from less integrated to more integrated, with patterns of leadership evolving from weaker to stronger. Subsequently, when states emerged as the dominant political actors on the world stage, anthropologists hoped the examination of bands, tribes,

Qaanaaq, Greenland, dog teams and Inuit hunters traveling to a hunt. Once, food foraging was the primary way of life for humans and our ancestors, but today, food foragers are limited to the most remote areas of the planet.

and chiefdoms might provide insights into the origins and fundamental nature of the state.

Bands

band: A small kinship-based group of foragers who hunt and gather for a living over a particular territory.

Anthropologists have used the term **band** to describe small, kinship-based groups of food foragers who move over a particular territory while hunting and gathering. Through archaeological evidence and the study of a few remaining band societies, anthropologists have identified key characteristics of band organization and leadership. A band might range in size from twenty to several hundred people, depending on the time of year and the group's hunting and ritual cycles. Bands break up and re-form regularly in response to conflicts among members and the development of new alliances.

Small, close-knit bands have served as the primary way of life not only for most modern humans over our 200,000-year history but also for our immediate ancestors. As a result, evolutionary biologists suggest that life in the band shaped the development of our earliest human characteristics and cultural patterns.

Politically, bands are highly decentralized, with decisions made primarily by consensus. Leaders emerge for a task at hand (organizing the hunt, moving the campsite, negotiating a conflict), with their leadership position resting on their skill, knowledge, generosity toward others, and level of respect within the band. With limited resources to compete for, bands have minimal stratification of wealth and power. But perhaps more important, bands require active cooperation among diverse groups of relatives and nonrelatives to successfully adapt to an unpredictable and shifting landscape. In turn, these early patterns may

have embedded in humans a tendency toward egalitarian social and political organization rather than hierarchy.

In his book *Hierarchy in the Forest: The Evolution of Egalitarian Behavior* (1999), evolutionary biologist Christopher Boehm explores what life in bands can tell us about whether humans are fundamentally hierarchical or egalitarian. Drawing on ethnographic studies of contemporary and historical hunter-gatherer bands as well as archaeological findings, Boehm argues that the sharing of scarce resources, including food, was the most economically efficient—indeed, essential—economic strategy for hunter-gatherer bands. And this strategy could be sustained only through egalitarianism. Cooperative gathering of foods, coordinated game hunting, and reciprocal sharing went hand in hand with resisting hierarchy and domination as successful adaptations for humans living in hunter-gatherer bands. As a result, over the course of human evolutionary history, hunter-gatherer bands and tribal communities generated an egalitarian ethos that promoted generosity, altruism, and sharing while resisting upstarts, aggression, and egoism.

In hunter-gatherer and other small-scale communities, which served as the political and economic framework for much of human existence, members invested enormous effort in suppressing hierarchy and enhancing cooperation. The resulting egalitarianism, in which people worked as a group to assert dominance over anyone who tried to establish themself as a leader, made the hunter-gatherer lifestyle possible. While other close primate kin—and perhaps humans themselves—may instinctively form social dominance hierarchies (that is, patterns of interpersonal domination) led by alpha individuals, evidence of egalitarian hunter-gatherer societies provides crucial insight into an alternative or complementary pattern that emerged when human interaction was shaped by life in small bands. Boehm argues that this social environment lasted long enough to shape innate human tendencies toward cooperation. Although hierarchical tendencies are present in egalitarian social systems, evidence reveals that members of these systems regularly balance out such tendencies as the weak work together to compensate for, and even dominate, the strong in order to create egalitarianism and effective community.

Despite serving as the predominant economic, social, and political structure over the course of human evolution, by the mid-twentieth century, only a few bands of food foragers remained. These groups were living in the most remote areas of the planet: the rain forests of South America, the arctic tundra of North America, and the deserts of Africa and Australia.

Tribes

The term *tribe* is frequently used in contemporary media when describing civil wars or other conflicts among groups within a state. In discussions of tribal

conflicts, tribal warfare, tribal factions, rifts, and alliances, *tribe* usually refers to a loosely organized group of people acting together outside the authority of the state under unelected leaders or big men/strong men and drawing on a sense of unity based on a notion of shared ethnicity. In many cases, current discussions use the term *ethnic group* instead of *tribe* (Ferguson 2011).

Most of these popular references to tribes imply that primitive, uncivilized, and violent peoples are engaging in conflict based on "ancient" tribal factions and hatreds. These faulty characterizations reflect the ethnocentric perspectives of observers who often operate from inside a state framework. They perpetuate the deeply problematic evolutionary assumption that less-complex political organizations are naturally less effective, stable, rational, and civilized than more-complex ones.

As originally formulated in political anthropology (Service 1962), the term *tribe* referred to a culturally distinct population, often combining several bands, that imagined itself as one people descended from a common ancestor and organized around villages, kin groups, clans, and lineages. Tribes in this sense appear to have emerged between 10,000 and 12,000 years ago as humans began to shift from food foraging to pastoralism and horticulture. Like bands, tribes are largely egalitarian, with a decentralized power structure and consensus decision-making. Leaders do emerge, sometimes called "village heads" or "big men" (Sahlins 1971), who garner the support of followers in several villages. But their power is limited. It is built and maintained through the leaders' personal achievements—such as conflict resolution, group organizing, success in war, and generosity of feasts and gifts—rather than awarded through political institutions.

Anthropologists have identified confederacies of tribes among Indigenous peoples in central Africa and on the central plains of North America that worked together to coordinate hunting, preserve the peace, or defend against perceived outside threats. Perhaps most famous is the Iroquois Confederacy formed by the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca: five distinct but closely related Indigenous groups in the northeastern United States and into Canada. The Iroquois Confederacy appears to have predated European colonial activity in the Americas. Many confederacies, however, were formed at the demand of colonial powers, which preferred to deal with defined political groups rather than migratory people with changing leaders and allegiances. The confederacy structure enabled colonizers to streamline the process of colonial control, especially for trade and treaty making (Snow 1994).

In recent centuries, settler colonial states have sought to eliminate or assimilate Indigenous peoples and tribes in order to extract labor and natural resources from them and their lands. Today, no groups operate totally outside the framework of the state, and most have been incorporated to some extent into the nation-states that have come to dominate the global political

landscape. Even a weak state or a failed state directly influences all those living within its borders. It is worth noting, however, that *tribe* today is also used in the self-naming and identity-building strategies of Indigenous groups, particularly Native Americans, as they continue to resist the ongoing dominance and extractive practices of the settler colonial state (Dennison 2017; Simpson 2014). In this context, today we might define a **tribe** more accurately as an Indigenous group of people with its own set of loyalties and leaders living to some extent outside the direct control of a centralized authoritative state.

tribe: In the context of evolutionary typology of political systems, a culturally distinct, multiband population that imagined itself as one people descended from a common ancestor; today, more often used to describe an Indigenous group with its own set of loyalties and leaders living to some extent outside the control of a centralized authoritative state.

chiefdom: An autonomous political unit composed of a number of villages or communities under the permanent control of a paramount chief.

Chiefdoms

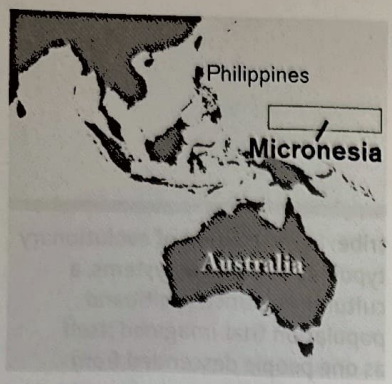
Within Service's evolutionary typology of political systems, the **chiefdom**—an autonomous political unit composed of a number of villages or communities under the permanent control of a paramount chief (Carneiro 1981)—represented a transitional form between the simpler political structures of tribes and the more complex political structures of states. As in bands and tribes, the social relations of the chiefdom were built around extended kinship networks or lineages. The chiefdom might encompass thousands of people spread over many villages.

Unique to chiefdoms, leadership was centralized under a single ruling authority figure—a chief who headed a ranked hierarchy of people, asserted political control over a particular territory, and held authority to make and enforce decisions. In parts of Polynesia, for instance, chiefs functioned as full-time political specialists who resolved conflicts and organized collective economic activity. The permanent position of chief endured from generation to generation, often passing through direct descent and inheritance from father to son or through other kinship relationships. Religious rituals and beliefs often served to confirm the chief's authority.

Through feasts and festivals such as the potlatch (see Chapter 10), the chief gathered a portion of the collective bounty of the chiefdom's harvest or hunt and redistributed the communal wealth to the populace, thereby symbolically and practically reinforcing the chief's central role among the people. Though group members' access to power and resources depended on their hierarchical relationship to the chief, the process of redistribution was key to moderating inequality and limiting conflict within the chiefdom.

Micronesia: Adapting Political and Social Structures to an Island Ecology

As mentioned earlier in this section, humans have always applied flexible strategies to improve life in their communities. In *Traditional Micronesian Societies* (2009), political anthropologist Glenn Petersen explores the creative adaptations of Micronesian social and political structures to the particular ecological challenges of island life. Micronesia is an archipelago of thousands of mostly small islands in the South Pacific that are often separated by hundreds of miles.



MAP 14.1
Micronesia

The islands are extremely fertile, with abundant fresh water, food, vegetation, and marine life. Normally, they are ideal places to live and can support a sizable population relative to their land mass.

But the islands—the average of which is a coral atoll less than fifteen feet above sea level—are also highly susceptible to catastrophic storms and droughts generated by fluctuating weather patterns over the Pacific. Droughts can easily devastate the vegetation and population of smaller islands. And storm surges associated with direct typhoon strikes can inundate the islands, completely saturating gardens with saltwater and causing a disaster that may require several years of intensive labor to rehabilitate. Although the frequency of devastating droughts or typhoons is unpredictable, their occurrence every twenty years or so has made an indelible mark on Micronesian political and social structure.

Petersen documents how, over time, Micronesians have developed an elaborate social and political organization that enables them to survive and quickly recover from natural disasters. Because of the distance between islands and the irregularity of weather patterns, devastation on one island may not touch neighboring islands. Thus, survivors often travel to other islands to find relief and support from extended kinship-based networks while they rehabilitate gardens at home. Key to this arrangement are the matrilineal clans widely dispersed among multiple islands that systematize the relations of reciprocity needed to overcome natural catastrophes.

Every Micronesian is a member of both a local lineage and a dispersed clan that includes local lineages on many islands. This dual political and social system is a highly effective adaptation to catastrophic natural disasters. Even when faced with personal tragedy and the destruction of home and garden, each Micronesian is able to rely on interpersonal networks on other islands for survival and assistance. All Micronesians know that they can move in with relatives on another island or may be expected to invite displaced relatives into their own homes while their kin reconstruct their gardens, homes, lineages, and lives. This kind of support is found on islands large and small. In fact, on larger, higher islands that are less vulnerable to drought and typhoon, feast making is central to lineage and community life. Feasts, which feature the sharing and redistribution of community surpluses, such as the potlatch discussed in Chapter 10, enable individuals and groups to build prestige. But they also serve as mechanisms for supporting families, lineages, and communities in times of crisis.

Violence and Conflict Resolution in Micronesia Petersen also notes the impact of the Micronesians' elaborate social and political structures on patterns of violence and conflict resolution within their society. Micronesian culture celebrates the warrior role, holding warriors and martial skill in high regard. In

Micronesian islanders confront the effects of natural disasters—like this home destroyed by a typhoon (*left*)—with creativity, signs of aesthetic beauty, and flexible kinship structures. In this context, generosity of spirit, duty to one's kin, and the ability to produce food and other goods in quantities that enable gift giving and feasting (*right*) are held in higher esteem than martial skill or the role of the warrior.

fact, a central role of the chief involves preparing the group for warfare and conflict. Warfare is always seen as a possible, sometimes unavoidable means of resolving disputes. The potential for conflict over scarce resources intensifies during times of natural disaster, drought, and flood. But Petersen argues that Micronesians employ these capacities for organized violence as deliberate strategies for maintaining peace. Preparing for war serves as a deterrent, reminding people of its potential costs and spurring the development of an extensive repertoire of ways to avoid warfare and violence.

Thus, while Micronesian culture places elaborate emphasis on the role of warriors and martial skill, these are, in the language of the central island Pohnpei, considered *tautik* (little service). Held in greater honor in traditional Micronesian culture are what the Pohnpeians call *taulap* (great service): generosity of spirit, duty to one's kin, and the ability to produce food and other goods in quantities that enable gift giving and feasting. These values are reflected and embedded in the elaborate social and political structures of dispersed matrilineal clans that provide a nonviolent means for moving people from resource shortage to resource availability, even during times of great crisis.

The Problem with Typologies

Though the typology of bands, tribes, chiefdoms, and states provided a basis for cross-cultural comparison, Service's evolutionary framework—assuming a steady progression from simple to complex and from primitive to civilized—frequently fails to capture the complexity and diversity of political practices

and institutions reflected in ethnographic studies and the archaeological record. For instance, evidence now clearly suggests that across human history, groups of bands, tribes, and chiefdoms were never as isolated or homogeneous as mid-twentieth-century anthropologists proposed. In contrast, today we argue that movement, encounter, exchange, and change have been the hallmarks of human groups, both small and large, throughout human history.

Nor could twentieth-century political systems always be considered trustworthy representations of the human past, recent or distant. Certainly, by the time anthropologists began to enter the field in the late nineteenth century to document and classify people and their political systems, European colonial expansion—including violent encounters—had transformed peoples and their political structures across the globe. Colonialism, the slave trade, the conquest of Indigenous peoples of the Americas, military activity, missionary efforts, and global trade deeply influenced every political arrangement, from the most populous urban setting to the most rural village. It is safe to say that anthropologists have not observed a band, tribe, or chiefdom that has not been influenced by colonialism, the power of the state, and the forces of globalization. And today, no political arrangement of band, tribe, or chiefdom can operate outside the pervasive influence of the state.

What Is the State?

» Define the state from an anthropological perspective.

As states took on an increasingly central role in shaping the local communities that anthropologists traditionally studied, political anthropologists turned their ethnographic attention to the state itself. Today, we typically define the **state** as an autonomous regional structure of political, economic, and military rule with a central government authorized to make laws and use force to maintain order and defend its territory.

state: An autonomous regional structure of political, economic, and military rule with a central government authorized to make laws and use force to maintain order and defend its territory.

Anthropologists link the origins of the state to the rise of agriculture. With fixed settlements, elite specialists emerged to manage increasingly complex economic activity (Wittfogel 1957), and warriors emerged to defend agricultural surpluses from marauders (Carneiro 1978). The ability of these local elites to collect taxes and tribute in increasingly unequal and stratified societies also supported aggressive efforts to consolidate smaller, autonomous villages into states, a process through which, political scientist Charles Tilley suggests, "war made the state and the state made war" (1975, 42). Some loosely configured states existed as early as 5,000 years ago in Mesopotamia and Egypt and somewhat later in China, Japan, the Indus Valley (which became parts of

modern-day India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan), and portions of the Americas. Throughout most of human history, however, people organized themselves primarily through less-centralized, flexible bands, tribes, and chiefdoms.

The global landscape of contemporary states that now dominates local, regional, and international affairs reflects the impact of Western expansion over the past 500 years, particularly European imperial and colonial expansion (see Chapter 11). European colonialists deployed economic, political, and military force to redraw the political borders of much of the world to meet their economic needs. In this process, they carved states and territories out of geographic areas inhabited by Indigenous groups who were organized along lines of local kinship, political, and economic relations. As a result, ethnic identities and state boundaries do not neatly align. Most states encompass many ethnic groups, and many ethnic groups can be found across multiple states.

Most states in the world today did not exist before World War II—certainly not in their current configurations. In fact, few states are older than the United States, which officially formed in 1783. Most gained independence from colonial rule only in the decades immediately following World War II. By 2022, there were 195 independent states in the world recognized by the United Nations.

The Modern Western-Style State

The type of state that has emerged since the sixteenth century, built largely on a Western model and expanded through colonization and globalization, developed with certain unique characteristics (Giddens 1985). Unlike earlier forms of the state, such as China's, which had relatively porous borders and loose administration, each modern state features a central administration designed to penetrate the everyday social life of its citizenry. A standing army asserts control over a carefully defined territory. Administrative, communication, and military infrastructures define and enforce the state's borders. The state, rather than a big man or chief, serves as the source of laws and law enforcement. And the state demands the primary allegiance of residents within its borders, undermining other local networks based on kinship, religion, or ethnicity (Asad 1992). Today, globalization, particularly the increasing flow of people, money, ideas, and things, is challenging states' capacity to control their borders and raising difficult debates about citizenship and belonging.

Externally, modern states compete economically and militarily with other states for resources and territory. Internally, each state seeks to establish a monopoly on the legitimate use of force within a territorial domain (Weber 1919). For example, it enlists citizens' cooperation and pacifies resistance through expanded administrative power in police forces, the judicial system, tax collection, and regulatory regimes (Giddens 1985). It also accomplishes these

When does the state become real to you? Consider the particular spaces in which you encounter the state. (*From left to right*) Police officers patrol New York City's Pennsylvania Station; a courtroom in Santa Fe, New Mexico; a voting booth in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico; the construction site of a bridge over the Danube River between Romania and Bulgaria; a street in Melbourne, Australia, where firefighters race to an emergency.

objectives via surveillance techniques and institutions such as prisons, hospitals, and asylums, through which individuals classified as deviant from the cultural norm are removed from mainstream society and disciplined (Foucault 1977).

One unique contribution of political anthropologists has been to study the processes of the state rather than its institutions and structures. Despite the illusion that the state is fixed, cohesive, and coherent, states are in fact constantly shaped and reshaped by elections, political campaigns, court rulings, creditors, legislation, and executive orders as well as daily interactions with individuals, communities, nonstate institutions, social movements, and other states. From this perspective, we can see that states are actually quite fluid, contested, and even fragile (Sharma and Gupta 2006).

How does the state become the ultimate authority within a particular territory? Anthropologists suggest that the state becomes real in the imaginations and experiences of people as they encounter it in a particular space. This spatialization of the state (Ferguson and Gupta 2002)—the perception that the state fills a particular space, encompasses all aspects of culture, and stands above all other elements of society—is produced through mundane bureaucratic state practices. Citizens encounter the state in everyday acts of governance: policing, mail delivery, tax collection, mapping, surveys, issuance of passports, jury duty, voting, notarization, distribution of food to the poor, distribution of pension checks to the elderly. Through these routine and repetitive acts, the state comes to feel all-encompassing and overarching—a dynamic that James Ferguson and Akhil Gupta (2002) call "vertical encompassment." Representations of the state on the television and radio, as well as in newspapers and movies, all contribute to the construction of the state as concrete and real: They reinforce the conception of the state as the primary institution through which people experience social relations—family, community, civil society, economic exchange.

Aspects of State Power

The rituals and routines of the state also include overt practices of coercion. In fact, political philosopher Max Weber argued in 1919 that the fundamental characteristic of a state is its ability to establish a monopoly on the legitimate use of force in a particular territorial domain (Parsons 1964). States exert coercive power not only through military and police forces but also through the guarding and regulating of borders, the determining of criteria for citizenship, and the enforcing of discipline through rules, regulations, taxation, and the judicial system.

State power is also established through **hegemony**, which is the ability of a dominant group to create consent and agreement within a population without the use or threat of force (Gramsci 1971). How is this done? As discussed in Chapter 2, cultural institutions of government, media, schools, and religions shape what group members think is normal, natural, and possible, thereby influencing and limiting the scope of human action and interaction. Group members develop a way of seeing the world—a set of beliefs about what is normal and appropriate—that subconsciously limits their life choices and chances. As discussed in Chapter 6, states reinforce this hegemony by promoting intense feelings of nationalism (a sense of shared history, culture, language, destiny, and purpose, often through invented traditions of holidays, parades, national songs, public ceremonies, and historical reenactments) to promote the perception of the state as a unified entity.

hegemony: The ability of a dominant group to create consent and agreement within a population without the use or threat of force.

The hegemonic aspect of power can make group members discipline their own behavior, believing and acting in certain "normal" ways (often against their own interests), even without threat of punishment for misbehavior (Foucault 1977). Within the hegemony of ideas, some thoughts and actions actually become unthinkable and undoable. Others seem reasonable, necessary, and desirable; these include collective actions for the greater good of the "nation,"

even going so far as killing and being killed, as we have discussed in relation to the war in Ukraine. Some modern states, however, are unable to gain the cooperation of their populace through consent and must resort to coercion. Where do you see this dynamic at work in the world today? How does the state become real for you? How are encounters with the state differentially shaped by one's race, gender, sexuality, citizenship, or immigration status?

How Is Globalization Affecting the State?

» Explain key ways globalization is affecting the state.

Today, globalization presents serious challenges to the state, particularly in terms of flexible accumulation, time-space compression, and expanding migration. The boundaries of the state—its influence and control over internal and external affairs—appear to be shrinking in the face of pressures related to globalization and the neoliberalizing global economy.

International Nonstate Actors Challenge State Sovereignty

In a global economy with increasing flows of people, money, goods, and ideas, state borders are becoming more porous. As a result, states are increasingly struggling to control who and what enters and leaves their territories. State sovereignty—the right of the state to maintain self-determination within its borders—is being challenged by powerful international nonstate actors.

As discussed in Chapter 11, international financial institutions such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization, backed by the world's most developed economies, are pressuring states to adopt neoliberal economic policies. These policies include free markets; free trade; the free movement of goods, capital, and ideas; and access to local markets for transnational corporations. Furthermore, to receive development loans from international financial institutions, countries must privatize state-owned infrastructure such as ports, water systems, utilities, and transportation and to reduce state funding for social services, health care, and education. Neoliberal economists suggest that these changes, while lessening states' ability to control what flows across their borders, will enhance their ability to compete in the global economy.

Economic restructuring promoted by international financial institutions and implemented by the state has yielded a flourishing of civil society. This is evident in the phenomenon of people joining together to form local organizations and movements to protest the social upheaval and uneven development that have accompanied the institution of neoliberal economic policies.

"Kayaktivists" who oppose Royal Dutch Shell's plans to drill for oil in the Arctic Ocean attempt to block Shell's Polar Pioneer drilling rig in Seattle's harbor. With a narrow summer window for arctic drilling, every day of delay reduces potential environmental damage.

These nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), sometimes called **civil society organizations**, have become key players in challenging state policies and creating space through which activists can work together to access resources and opportunities for their local communities.

civil society organization: A local nongovernmental organization that challenges state policies and uneven development and advocates for resources and opportunities for its local community.

Civil Society Organizations Gain a Global Reach

One key strategy of civil society organizations—which many states have viewed warily—has been to join forces with transnational movements and networks to recast local problems and conflicts as part of a global project for rights and resources. By connecting with groups outside their national borders, local civil society organizations can work with other activists, networks, and campaigns, such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Africa Watch, World Vision, and even international agencies like the United Nations. These linkages enable civil society organizations to advocate for local environmental concerns, demilitarization, women's rights, LGBTQ+ rights, human rights, and Indigenous rights—issues that also transcend the borders of the state.

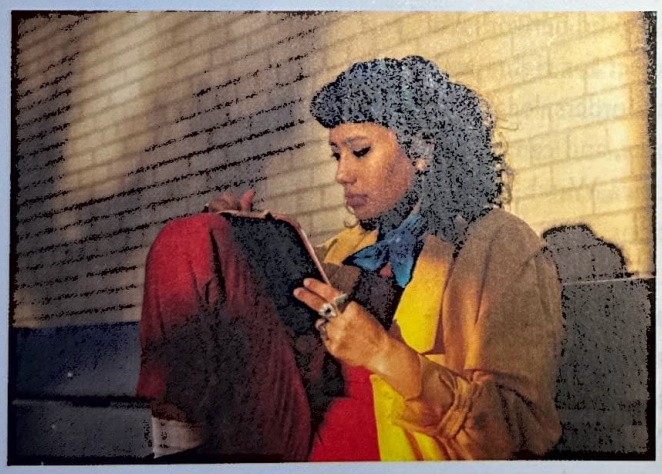
Communication and transportation advances associated with time-space compression—from cell phones to Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube—facilitate the formation of these transnational networks. This process not only promotes the flow of observers, advisors, and participants into meetings and conferences but also stimulates global information flows of on-the-ground developments and organizing strategies. Working together, international coalitions mobilize global sentiment and bring pressure to bear on nation-states to address

Making the State Real

Anthropologists James Ferguson and Akhil Gupta (2002) suggest that the abstract entity of the state becomes real in the imaginations and experiences of people as it is encountered in daily life. How does the state become real for you? Keep a diary of the ways you encounter the power of the state—federal, state, and local—in any given day. Use the following categories to get started. Can you identify at least twenty-five daily encounters with the state?

Food: How does the state regulate and shape the food you eat? Are there labels on your food that indicate the presence of the state? What do they say? If you eat out, how does the state regulate the restaurant, its food preparation, and its employees? What role does the state play in regulating trash disposal or recycling?

People: Note the public employees you encounter in a day. Are they wearing uniforms? How does their job shape and influence your life? Were there more or fewer public employees in your life than you expected?



In your diary, keep record of the ways you encounter power based on the categories.

Transportation: When you are traveling around your city or town, observe how the state shapes your experience. What kinds of signs, rules, and fees do you encounter? What investment has the state made in transportation infrastructure like roads, stoplights, buses, and trains?

School: How does the state shape your school experience? What role does the state have in how you pay for your education? What funding does the local, state, or federal government provide your school?

Environment: In what ways does the state shape aspects of your environment like air quality, water purity, auto emissions, factory pollution, sewage, trash disposal, toxic chemicals, and pesticides?

Infrastructure: How does the state support your daily needs like water, electricity, trash removal, clean streets, and public safety?

Public Agencies: Describe local, state, and federal agencies and offices that shape your day.

Social Life: How does the state shape your social life? Consider age restrictions or other regulation of activities like driving, drinking, cannabis use, sex, and marriage.

Media: What is the state's role in media like television, radio, the Internet, news, or social media?

Absence: In what aspects of your life do you feel the state is absent? Is this beneficial or detrimental? How would a stronger state presence change this part of your life?

problems occurring within their borders. In this way, civil society coalitions challenge the ultimate claims of state sovereignty over intrastate affairs.

Tanzania: The Maasai Demand Political Rights and International Recognition Anthropologist Dorothy Hodgson documents the rise of civil society organizations in Tanzania, East Africa, in *Being Maasai, Becoming Indigenous: Postcolonial Politics in a Neoliberal World* (2011). The Maasai have traditionally lived as seminomadic pastoralists raising cattle on the open rangelands of Tanzania and Kenya. Marginalized within their own nation, first by colonial governments and later by the state established after independence from Britain in 1961, the Maasai live on the economic and political periphery. They have low levels of education, limited access to health care, and high levels of poverty.

Though the Maasai lifestyle has been changing and pastoralist economic patterns have been diversifying to include cultivation, trade, and wage labor, the Maasai have remained largely invisible to bureaucratic state planners, who have viewed the Maasai rangelands as "unoccupied" and have frequently sold or leased them to investors and developers.

MAP 14.2
The Maasai

Spurred by increasing land loss and impoverishment, in the 1990s the Maasai and other pastoralists in northern Tanzania began to create NGOs in an attempt to assert their political rights to resources and recognition and to represent themselves in negotiations with state and international entities. In just over a decade, they created more than 100 NGOs. Key to their strategy was a decision to represent themselves as "Indigenous" in order to build alliances in the international Indigenous rights movement. The move generated hostile responses from the Tanzanian government, which had sought to downplay ethnic divisions within the country. But the claim of Indigenous rights established the Maasai as prominent actors in the eyes of the United Nations and other international human rights bodies and attracted millions of dollars of funding for the NGOs from a wide array of international organizations focused on the plight of "first peoples."

This rapid influx of outside funding and attention generated tremendous internal tensions in the Maasai community. Rifts developed among activists along lines of gender, generation, and class and between the younger educated men who tended to run the NGOs and the rural, unschooled, grassroots communities they represented. By the early 2000s, Maasai NGOs strategically shifted themselves away from identification with Indigenous rights. Instead, they cultivated a new reputation as advocates on the issue of livelihood: What cultural rights, land rights, political recognition, and services were necessary to preserve the pastoralist livelihood of the Maasai people? This shift allowed them to strike a new balance between two goals: They continued to advocate

Maasai women in Tanzania address issues of poverty and livelihood through a microenterprise producing local handicrafts.

for Maasai political rights in relationship to the state government, but they also developed a new identity as civil society organizations dedicated to serving their people through the delivery of services and economic resources.

Hodgson (2001, 2005), a longtime observer of Maasai culture with a deep knowledge of northern Tanzania, reflects on the broader significance of these creative and often challenging projects. She notes that the Maasai efforts to address impoverishment and marginalization reveal trends and tensions prevalent in many developing nations as local communities explore avenues for political action in local contexts shaped both by the legacies of colonialism and by contemporary neoliberal economic and political policies (Homewood 2012; Lesorogol 2012).

What Are the Relationships among Politics, the State, Violence, and War?

» Assess the origins of violence and war and their relationships to politics and the state.

Perhaps no use of power is more troubling and challenging than violence, the "bodily harm that individuals, groups and nations inflict on one another in the course of their conflicts" (Ury 2002, 7). Conflict happens on the playground, in the classroom, on the job, and on the battlefield. As we look globally today, violent conflict seems not to be sporadic, but permanent—with continuous

war in one place or another involving extraordinarily sophisticated tools and weaponry (Waterston 2009).

Are Humans Naturally Violent or Peaceful?

For many centuries, the basic question of whether humans are naturally violent or peaceful has figured in discussions and debates about politics, war, and peace. Is there something in our evolutionary past that predisposes modern humans to behave in a particular way when confronted with conflict?

The main arguments can be simplified into three generalizations. First, some believe that organized human violence is a natural expression of the inherent human condition. In this view, human aggression and violence may be attributed to physiological factors such as testosterone, DNA, and neural wiring. A second conception of violence considers humans to be inherently peaceful. In this view, violence arises through cultural practices and patterns that overwhelm basic human nature. A third scenario places the roots of human violence in between nature and culture. For instance, humans may be naturally prone to violence but culturally capable of avoiding it. Or humans may be naturally peaceful and only culturally provoked into forsaking their nature. Or these two alternatives are evenly matched.

Challenging the Myth of Killer Apes and Aggressive Humans Some who see contemporary violence as a legacy of our evolutionary past point to common myths about aggressive primates and killer apes as evidence. If aggression, competition, and violence are part of our primate relatives' evolutionary development, they argue, then these impulses must be deeply ingrained in human nature as well. According to this view, aggression, competition, and violence linked to genes and hormones must be generated internally and instinctively released in social relations. Conflict, then, naturally drives individuals farther apart into competing groups.

Physical anthropologist Frans de Waal (2002, 2014), reviewing studies of living primate macaques, chimpanzees, and bonobos, points out patterns of behavior that directly challenge this myth. De Waal notes, for instance, that for social animals such as primates, a pattern of conflict and distancing would lead to everyone living alone, yielding ineffective relationships for individuals who rely on social cooperation for survival. In the primate social groups de Waal has reviewed, a far more complicated dynamic emerges in times of conflict. Rather than increased distance, reconciliation occurs on a regular basis. In fact, in twenty-five separate primate groups, researchers have observed increased attraction between opponents after fights, revealing powerful inclinations toward reconciliation among individuals who have a great deal to lose if their relationship deteriorates (e.g., Lappan 2014). Among bonobos, a primate group closely related

Are humans naturally violent or peaceful? Despite myths of killer apes and aggressive humans, in primate studies, increased attraction is regularly observed between opponents after a conflict. Here, two female bonobos reconcile after a fight.

to humans on a genetic level, sex is used to resolve conflicts. Bonobo conflicts and tensions occur in all combinations of female and male. So do reconciliations. Bonobos have a high rate of reconciliation and a low rate of violence.

De Waal suggests that primates exercise various options for resolving conflicts, including avoidance, tolerance, and aggression. They deploy these options at various times depending on the situation, the partner, and the stakes. According to de Waal (2002), primate studies indicate that "aggression [is] not . . . the product of an inner drive but . . . one of the options that exists when there is a conflict of interest" (24). Ultimately, researchers may find that aggressive primate behavior has a genetic component, but this component does not operate in isolation, nor is it necessarily dominant. Equally natural among primates, including humans, are mechanisms for cooperation, conflict resolution, rechanneling of aggression, and reconciliation (de Waal 2002).

The State and the Invention of War

Political anthropologists actively explore the complicated cultural processes through which war is invented, learned, and enacted (Besteman 2002; Besteman and Cassanelli 1996; Farmer 2003; Ferguson 2002; Gusterson 1996, 2004; Lutz 2001; Waterston 2009). Over the past one hundred years, war has become far more than waging hand-to-hand combat or pulling a trigger at close range—actions that we might associate with aggression driven by hormones. Instead, modern warfare is considerably more premeditated and calculated, relying on computers, satellites, missiles, GPS tracking, and airborne drone strikes.

Today, anthropologists study a highly militarized world in which war seems normalized and permanent. Warfare has become one of the most visible of all human political institutions that reveals the state's pursuit of power. Warfare occurs not only between states but also within them, as those in power may mobilize the state military apparatus against fellow citizens. As we will see in Carolyn Nordstrom's work later in this chapter, we can no longer consider warfare to be a local military phenomenon. Indeed, modern warfare is embedded in a global system of war making. This fact pushes anthropologists to study the intersection of multiple factors that work to construct warfare as a reasonable means for resolving conflicts. These factors may be as disparate as economic stratification, ethnic identity formation, migration, weapons manufacturing and trade, and the imbalance between weak states and strong states as well as resource shortages involving oil, water, and land (Nugent and Vincent 2004).

Militarization A growing body of anthropological literature has focused on **militarization**—the contested social process through which a civil society organizes for the production of military violence (Lutz 2004; see also Bickford 2011; Geyer 1989). Catherine Lutz, an anthropologist of militarization, in *Homefront: A Military City and the American Twentieth Century* (2001), describes how the processes of militarization include not only the production of material objects such as bullets, bombs, tanks, planes, and missiles but also the glorification of war and those who make war as states seek to shape their national histories and political culture.

militarization: The contested social process through which a civil society organizes for the production of military violence.

Lutz warns that militarization left unchecked threatens to shape other cultural institutions to its own ends. For example, it influences research in physics, information technology, and psychology; it affects national budget priorities; it affects discussions and debates about gender and sexuality, race and citizenship, privacy and security; and it limits discussions in the news, online, or in the classroom.

Sociologist C. Wright Mills, in his classic study *The Power Elite* (1956), warned that building an expansive military structure and the industrial capacity to support it—a military industrial complex—ultimately would lead to a "military definition of reality" in which human interactions would be seen through the logic of warfare and violence. War would become the "common sense of the nation." The central elements of this militarized thinking include cultural assumptions that defense is the first need of every organism, that human beings are naturally aggressive and territorial, that force is the primary means to get things done in the world, and that if one weapon creates security, a thousand weapons create more security. The fact that these assumptions seem reasonable to many people was evidence to Mills of the power of militarized culture to shape how people think.

David Vine

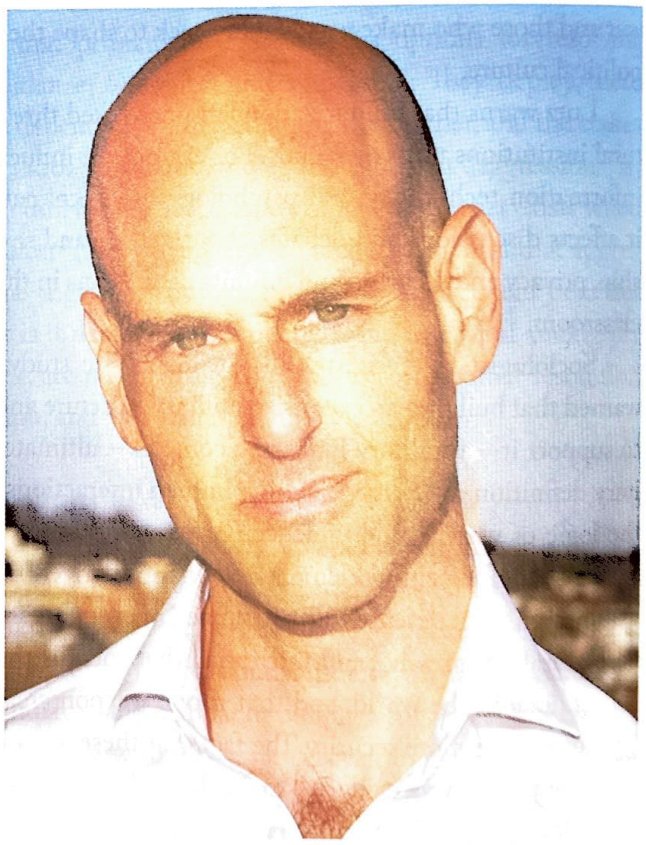
Militarization at Home and Abroad

Anthropologist David Vine, professor at American University, studies U.S. militarization and its impact on people around the world and in the United States. His book *Base Nation: How U.S. Military Bases Abroad Harm America and the World* (2015) documents the effects of the more than 800 U.S. military bases operating outside the United States. Their global footprint shapes not only U.S. military interventions but also the lives of local people, U.S. military families, Indigenous populations, and the environment. The cost to the U.S. national budget alone, Vine estimates, is around $100 billion a year. His most recent book is *If We Build Them, Wars Will Come: Military Bases, Permanent War, and American Empire from Columbus to Today* (2020).

Vine became interested in militarization in graduate school while conducting research for a group of exiles from the island Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. "In the late 1960s, the U.S. and British governments forcibly removed this entire Indigenous people, the Chagossians, from Diego Garcia to create a major U.S. military base. They were simply dumped in exile, deported to the islands of Mauritius and the Seychelles with no resettlement assistance. Unsurprisingly, they became deeply impoverished, and despite that, over the last almost fifty years now, they've been struggling to get back to their homeland and get proper compensation for what they've suffered. That opened my eyes to the world of U.S. military bases overseas and the damaging effects of so many of them.

"Ethnographic skills were very helpful in allowing me to live with the Chagossians, participate and research their daily lives, and see the ways in which their lives have been deeply damaged by living in exile. But I was also interested in not just looking at the ways the Chagossians have suffered but understanding why my government, the U.S. government, decided it needed a military base in the middle of the Indian Ocean and why it was appropriate to exile the entire people. I became part of a growing group of anthropologists who have studied U.S. foreign policy, U.S. military policy and policy makers, and done so with ethnographic methods." Vine's research became his book *Island of Shame: The Secret History of the U.S. Military Base on Diego Garcia* (2009).

But what of the impact of U.S. militarization on the United States itself? "I don't think people understand how much taxpayer money we are pouring into the military. By some estimates it's around a trillion dollars annually—at least half the discretionary budget of the government. I think the Pentagon today—the U.S. military—has become a fourth branch of government. It controls such a large portion of the budget in this country and has so much power—easily as much as the legislative or judicial branches.



Anthropologist David Vine

"President Eisenhower coined the term 'military-industrial complex.' I think it's a useful way of understanding the combined power of the military, the military services, and the military contractors that build weaponry. Members of Congress are also part of this system that has exerted tremendous power in our daily lives and shapes, in often invisible but powerful ways, our political lives, economic lives, even our spiritual and cultural lives."

Vine warns about the ways even students have become militarized—embedded in this system of militarization. "I think Eisenhower's military-industrial complex speech should be required reading. He pointed out that every billion dollars spent on a bomber is money that is being taken from someone who's unclothed, who's going hungry or is poorly educated. Today, the reason undergraduates are going into so much debt—one reason college costs so much and secondary schools are in such poor shape—is because we've poured so much of our tax money, our national wealth, into the military and not into schools, hospitals, housing, and infrastructure.

> *"Research has shown time and again that military solutions are not effective ways to solve international problems."*

"In the post-9/11 era, we're spending money at a rate like we were at the height of the Cold War when we were faced with another superpower with nuclear arms. Now we face no such enemy and our military spending in many ways has become counterproductive. It has actually inflamed tensions in many cases. This is where bases come in. They've outraged local populations who—not surprisingly and understandably—don't want their lands occupied by U.S. bases and U.S. troops. All that money is not, generally speaking, making us safer. In many ways, it's actually making us less safe."

Students can take steps to demilitarize themselves, Vine suggests, "first by starting to become aware of the influence of the military and the glorification of war in your lives. Perhaps even with the clothes you wear, like the camouflage that's pervasive in our fashion. And then in the media you consume. Perhaps ask yourself why war games involving mass killing are so popular and how that's shaping our lives and how we think about the world and even shaping our brains. Another dimension of militarization of popular culture is Hollywood. Look at how popular violence is in media, including movies and TV. Begin to become aware of how war and violence are celebrated. And certainly begin to pay attention to money that's being invested in war and the military and begin to talk with friends and neighbors and family about the choices that our political leaders are making with our tax dollars, taking money from our schools, hospitals, infrastructure, and housing.

"There are other direct actions that people can take, beginning with opposing any future wars or military interventions. Research has shown time and again that military solutions, military responses are not effective ways to solve international problems. They're certainly not effective solutions to terrorism. And get involved in efforts to move money from the military budget to the civilian side of the budget. Research has shown that money invested in health care and education and infrastructure creates many more jobs than the equivalent amount of spending in the military."

Vine has actively worked to resist efforts to militarize anthropology as a co-founder of the Network of Concerned Anthropologists. "We created this group in response to efforts by the military and CIA to recruit anthropologists into the War on Terror and to serve in Afghanistan and Iraq. They became in some cases armed anthropologists. This is a direct violation of our professional code of ethics to *do no harm* to the people and other animals with whom we do research. Anthropologists organized to oppose this effort to recruit other anthropologists and we were quite successful."

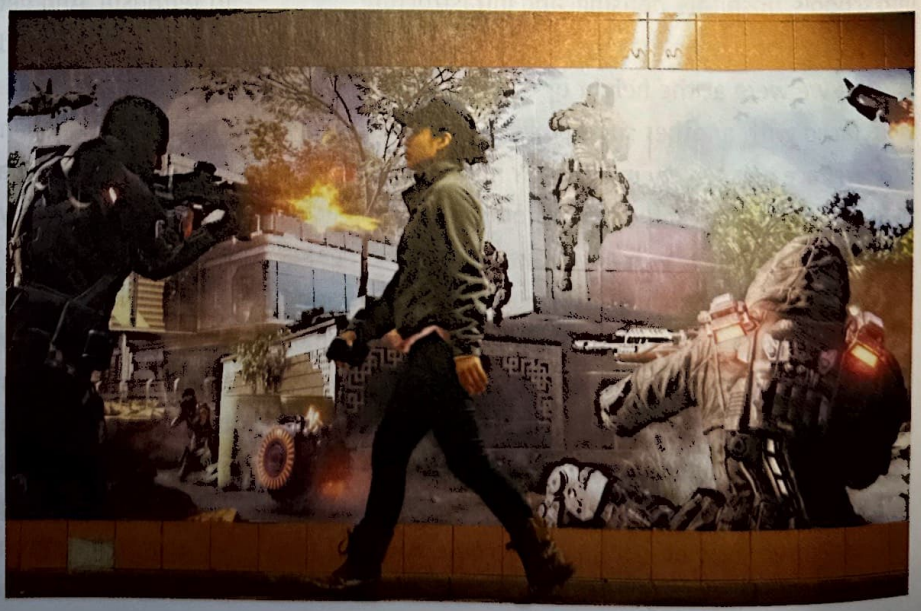
Lutz (2004) suggests that militarization ultimately creates a kind of hegemony of thinking: It limits what is perceived as normal and natural, what can and cannot be said or done. It identifies some people as allies and others as enemies. It dehumanizes and demonizes to make hating and killing seem logical, normal, and appropriate.

MAP 14.3
Germany

Constructing Soldiers, Constructing War Are soldiers born or made? Is it possible that if war must be constructed, soldiers must be constructed too? In *Fallen Elites* (2011), Andrew Bickford explores the process of militarization, particularly the process by which soldiers are made—and unmade—by the state. Bickford's work sheds light on how states make soldiers in order to make war.

Bickford studied the life histories of military officers and border guards of the former East Germany who had been living in reunified Germany since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1990. Originally stationed by the U.S. military as a soldier on the front lines in Berlin toward the end of the Cold War in 1984, Bickford returned after reunification as an anthropologist. He found himself at interviews, meals, and meetings sitting across the table from his recent enemies, some of whom readily admitted that, given the opportunity, in the earlier era they would have shot and killed him without hesitation. After all, he had been a member of the U.S. military—an enemy. Now, demobilized by the unified German military, these formerly powerful elites of the hardline communist East German military participated in Bickford's anthropological study. How could matters of life and death have shifted so easily?

No one is born a soldier, argues Bickford. Soldiers do not come prepackaged and ready to fight, kill, and die. Instead, individuals must be made into soldiers



How does popular culture glorify war and those who make war? A woman walks by an advertisement for the video game *Call of Duty: Black Ops III*.

through processes of enculturation that teach them to fear, hate, and kill—processes that define particular people as the enemy, as a dangerous, mortal threat. And as the demobilized East German officers in Bickford's study reveal, soldiers who are made can also be unmade.

Because soldiers become the flesh-and-blood actors performing on behalf of the state, Bickford notes how crucial it is for the state to construct a powerful ideal of the soldier—an ideal imbued with characteristics of courage, honor, strength, and duty. This ideal becomes the preeminent symbol of the state and its power. In the process, the hero soldier comes to represent the ideal citizen who embodies the state's key values and worldview.

The construction of soldiers as model citizens happens in numerous ways. States formally honor the memory of soldiers. They also promote soldiers' character, representing in mythologized language and ritual their heroic deeds in defense of the state: their service as strong and virtuous warriors, protectors, and conquerors—indeed, as powerful agents of life and death, yet also as simple men and women with a job to do to protect their families, their nation, and its way of life. Creating the ideal of the soldier and linking that ideal to notions of citizenship, national identity, and the honor and legitimacy of the state, argues Bickford, is essential to the process of militarization.

Making and Unmaking Child Soldiers in Sierra Leone Between 1991 and 2002, a brutal civil war upended the lives of Sierra Leone's 7.5 million citizens: 50,000 people died in the fighting, 2 million refugees fled to neighboring Liberia and Guinea, 10,000 children became combatants. All of Sierra Leone's factions recruited child soldiers—boys and girls from all regions of the country. The children carried guns, commanded battles, and served as porters, messengers, cooks, spies, and "wives." Some were abducted and forced to join a faction. Others joined willingly, seeking an escape from poverty and their local encounters with violence.

MAP 14.4
Sierra Leone

In *Childhood Deployed: Remaking Child Soldiers in Sierra Leone* (2014), anthropologist Susan Shepler explores the experiences of these young people through her fieldwork in five reintegration centers for child soldiers run by international NGOs in the aftermath of war. Over the course of eighteen months, Shepler visited the centers, listened to young people's stories, and attended their classes and skill-training sessions.

The United Nations and other aid agencies, drawing on international understandings of the rights of children, have defined child soldiers as anyone under eighteen years old associated with an armed group, regardless of whether or not they were involved in combat. By definition, child soldiers were seen as children and innocent victims of war first, not combatants. Globalized Western concepts of "normal" childhood—innocence, carefree play, development and

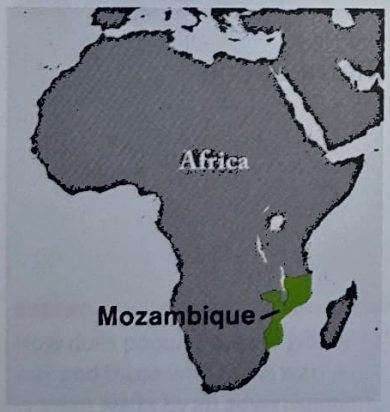
education—led U.N. programs to attempt to reunite families after the war and reintegrate child soldiers into their home communities and a lost childhood.

Shepler's research reveals the gap between international aid agencies' ideas and moral expectations of childhood and Sierra Leoneans' cultural beliefs and practices. While child labor is often illegal in Western countries, Sierra Leoneans expect children to work alongside adults, frequently as apprentices outside the family. Children are often breadwinners for the family and are seen as active participants in their own and their family's economic strategy. Also outside Western norms, they may be taken in by other families in a form of local fosterage and initiated into secret societies at young ages in order to receive hunting and ritual knowledge from elders.

These local cultural practices and beliefs, argues Shepler, shed light on the ways in which the recruitment and deployment of child combatants in Sierra Leone's civil war were consistent with local understandings of childhood and child–adult relationships. Shepler critiques international NGOs' failures to consider local notions of childhood in developing their programs for demobilization and reintegration. Are the former combatants simply innocent children, forced into war, and returning home to childhood? Or are they formerly powerful soldiers whose status in their community has now shifted, especially with respect to their power relationships to and dependence on their elders?

Anthropology on the Front Lines of War and Globalization

In today's conflictual world, anthropologists have many opportunities to study current cases of warfare and violence in the context of pressures from globalization. Anthropologist Carolyn Nordstrom's work exemplifies contemporary anthropological contributions to this kind of study. Nordstrom focuses on the real, messy, local experiences of violence, resistance, survival, and creativity in actual communities where war occurs, not in the comfortable offices and remote institutions of military officials and political leaders. At the same time, she spotlights the complex web of local and foreign interactions and actors that drive war and make warfare a global phenomenon.



MAP 14.5
Mozambique

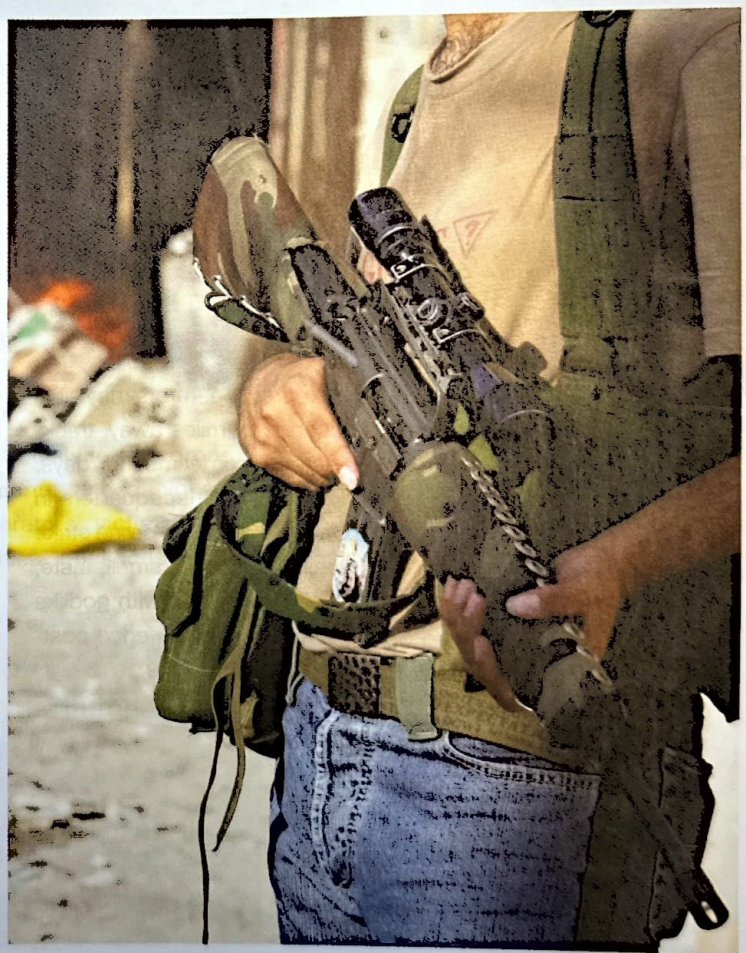
Mozambique Between 1989 and 1996, Nordstrom made multiple visits to war-torn areas of Mozambique. The southeast African country's fifteen-year civil war after independence from Portugal claimed a million lives, mostly civilian. To reach rural and forested regions, she traveled with bush pilots making airlifts into war zones. In contrast to detached journalistic war reports, Nordstrom experienced firsthand the low-intensity conflict called "terror warfare" that targeted the country's civilian population through military attacks, hunger, and displacement.

Rebel guerrillas and Mozambican government soldiers targeted the basic structures of Mozambican community life—hospitals, schools, and government

offices as well as teachers, health-care professionals, religious authorities, and community leaders—in their acts of warfare. By destroying and disrupting these institutions, practices, and key practitioners of local culture, the forces of violence sought to undermine the local population's political will.

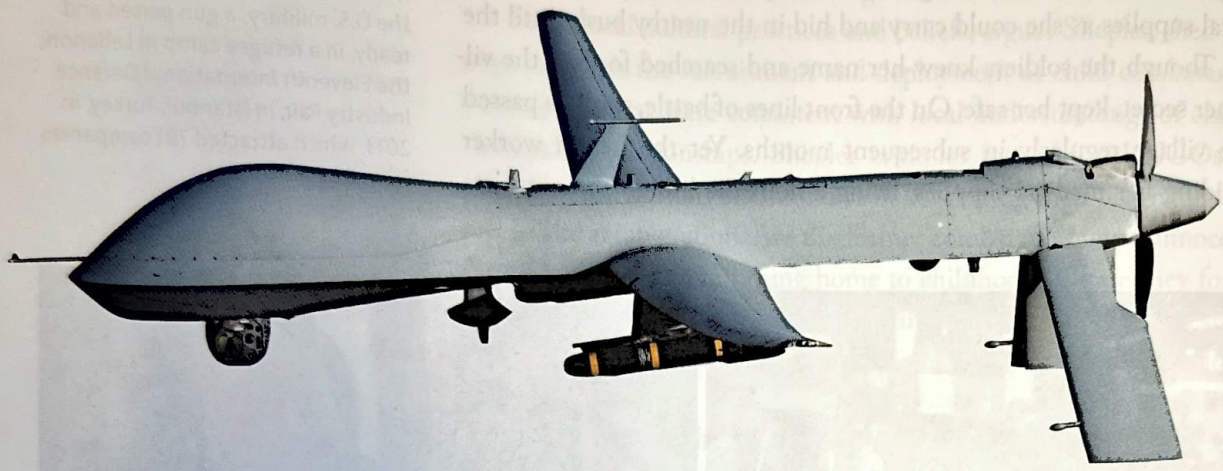
In her ethnography of civil war in Mozambique, *A Different Kind of War Story* (1997), Nordstrom recounts the determined creativity that local populations used to combat this terror and violence. In one village heavily targeted and frequently overrun by troops of both armies, most community leaders and service providers had fled as refugees to avoid potential assassination. Most resources and infrastructure had been destroyed. During the first severe attack on the village, however, one remaining health-care practitioner gathered up as many medical supplies as she could carry and hid in the nearby bush until the soldiers left. Though the soldiers knew her name and searched for her, the villagers kept her secret, kept her safe. On the front lines of battle, soldiers passed through the village regularly in subsequent months. Yet the health worker remained, hiding her medical supplies, living a nomadic life on the outskirts

What is the social life of a dangerous thing like a rifle, a bullet, or a bomb? (*Clockwise, from top left*) The Colt Defense factory in Hartford, Connecticut, makes the M16 and M4 rifles, the rifles of choice of the U.S. military; a gun poised and ready, in a refugee camp in Lebanon; the Eleventh International Defence Industry Fair, in Istanbul, Turkey, in 2013, which attracted 781 companies from 82 countries.



THE SOCIAL LIFE OF THINGS
Drones and Remote Control Warfare

For over fifteen years, the U.S. military and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) have been using weaponized drones—unmanned aircraft—to conduct highly secretive targeted killings in the warzones of Afghanistan and Iraq and against terrorists in countries like Somalia, Yemen, and Pakistan. The U.S. public knows little about drones, how they are used, who controls them, or who their targets are. In *Drone: Remote Control Warfare* (2016) anthropologist Hugh Gusterson explores how drones are quietly reshaping the practice of warcraft and blurring the lines between civilians and combatants, intimacy and distance, policing and warfare.



1 How does it feel to operate a remote control drone? As drones circle miles above their prey, operators may sit in air-conditioned rooms thousands of miles away, tracking their victim on a video screen, sometimes for days, before launching an attack. From CIA headquarters in Virginia or an air force station in Nevada, the drone strike is quick, clean, and bloodless—no sound, smell, taste, or texture. Operators act as executioners, with godlike power over life and death. Many later experience post-traumatic stress disorder from their actions.

2 On the other end of the drone attack, victims and local residents have a different experience. Without warning, missiles descend from the sky, erupting with violent and deadly force. Survivors tell of smoke, screams, the smell of burning, the ground trembling beneath them, the pain of shrapnel wounds, and the enduring grief in the aftermath. How do they know the drone will not return? The safe predictability of life has been permanently destroyed.

3 Advocates of drone attacks emphasize their effectiveness: They accurately target their prey while minimizing civilian casualties. Opponents warn that combatant and civilian casualties have been severely underreported. They worry about slippage in drone missions from military operations to policing efforts—policing the world from the sky at the U.S. president's sole discretion, even when warfare is not legally authorized. And some world leaders condemn the drones' breach of their sovereign territory. Do acts of war conducted without warlike activity or U.S. human cost make the move to war far too easy?

A drone, even a weaponized drone, is simply a machine. But the social life of a drone—how it is deployed, targeted against combatants and noncombatants, and deployed in accordance with or against international law; how it affects operators, victims, and a nation's democratic institutions—raises complex ethical and political questions that an anthropology of things brings into sharper focus.

- Do you know how many times the United States launches a drone attack in any given week, the number of people killed, the number of unintended deaths, or the countries where airstrikes have occurred?
- Have you ever heard or read a firsthand account from victims of a drone strike? If not, why?
- Why do so few protest the United States' use of weaponized drones?

of the area, and being protected by the villagers, who continued to carry their ailing members to her for treatment.

These actions by the health worker and the villagers typify the creativity that Nordstrom finds to be the most potent weapon against war—the determination to survive and resist, to continually refashion and reconstruct one's self, community, and world. Nordstrom concludes her ethnography by suggesting that if, as early political philosophers such as Thomas Hobbes proposed, violence is the "natural state" of human affairs when political institutions collapse, then war-torn regions such as Mozambique should be rife with scenes of aggression, acts of self-preservation, and individual attempts at survival in a dog-eat-dog world. Instead, Nordstrom consistently found people who resisted and defeated the political violence of war by attending to the day-to-day matters of their community—sharing food, healing wounds, repairing lives, teaching children, performing rituals, exchanging friendship, rebuilding places, and creatively reconstructing the everyday patterns that constitute a meaningful life (Englund 1999; Honwana 1999; Richards 1999).

The Global Business of War In a later book, *Shadows of War* (2004), Nordstrom makes the case that standard notions of local wars fought by local actors over local issues are largely fiction. Through a comparative study of war and violence in Mozambique, Sri Lanka, South Africa, and Angola, she instead traces the extensive global networks of individuals and industries that feed and fuel local violence and war. Mercenary soldiers, foreign strategists, arms suppliers, businesspeople, underground marketeers, smugglers, humanitarian relief workers, researchers, propagandists, and journalists all circle the globe, moving from one war to the next. The United States, Russia, China, France, and Germany lead the world in global arms sales (SIPRI 2018).

Multitrillion dollar international financial networks support warfare. Illegal drugs, precious gems, weapons, food supplies, military training manuals, and medicines are moved by international networks of legitimate and illegitimate businesses and agencies that profit from war.

Thanks to globalization, the business of war now operates on a worldwide scale. It influences both the architects of war, who primarily engage the battle from a distance, and the people who suffer the consequences on a war's front lines. Discussing the local people affected by the business of war, Nordstrom notes that theirs are not the typical war stories recounted in the media. When war is portrayed only through the prism of weapons, soldiers, territory, and strategic interests won or lost, a more significant reality is ignored: the heroic efforts of people on the front lines who resist and maintain life in the face of violence and death (Finnstrom 2005).

With globalization, an extensive network of individuals and industries circles the globe from one war to the next. (*Counterclockwise, from top*) Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees workers distribute blankets to Syrian refugees along the Jordan–Syria border, 2012; members of the media mark their flak jackets as gunfire rings out near the Tripoli Hotel in Lebanon, 2011; an Australian mercenary trains rebel recruits in Myanmar.

How Do People Mobilize Power outside the State's Control?

» Demonstrate knowledge of ways people mobilize power outside the state's control.

Systems of power, including the state, are never absolute. Their dominance is never complete. Even when a culture's dominant groups and institutions are very powerful in terms of their ability to exercise force or to establish control through hegemony, they do not fully dominate people's lives and thinking. Individuals and groups with less power or no power may still contest established power relationships and structures through political, economic, religious, or military means and can challenge and change cultural norms, values, symbols, and institutions. This power is a potential that anthropologists call **agency** (see Holland and Lave 2001).

agency: The potential power of individuals and groups to contest cultural norms, values, mental maps of reality, symbols, institutions, and structures of power.

In displays of human agency, culture becomes the realm in which battles over power are waged, where people contest, negotiate, and enforce what is considered normal and what people can say, do, and even think. Because of human agency, cultures do not remain rigid and static. They change.

Efforts to change cultural patterns through expressions of agency take various forms, including individual strategies of everyday resistance, such as the "weapons of the weak" (Scott 1985) discussed in Chapter 2; collective efforts such as social movements; and alternative institutions to the state such as those based on religion.

Social Movements

Social movements are collective group actions that seek to build institutional networks to transform cultural patterns and government policies. They often arise in response to uneven development, inequality, and injustice. Although social movements engage in contentious politics, usually outside the mainstream political process, to address specific social issues, they usually do not seek to overthrow the social order. The study of social movements is interdisciplinary, engaging not only anthropologists but also sociologists, political scientists, and historians (Edelman 2001).

social movement: Collective group actions that seek to build institutional networks to transform cultural patterns and government policies.

Recently, the anthropological analysis of social movements has focused on local communities' responses to the forces of globalization. Factors such as the worldwide movement of capital and production through flexible accumulation, increasing migration within and across national borders, and rapidly increasing yet uneven rates of development have spurred the emergence of social movements as local communities have organized to protect their land, environment, human rights, and cultural identities in a changing economic and political

Activists in Kathmandu, Nepal, demand constitutional protections for Dalits who have been systematically marginalized by the region's caste system.

context. Simultaneously, time-space compression has facilitated increased communication and cooperation among individuals, social movements, and NGOs, creating opportunities for a "globalization from below" (Falk 1993, 39).

As we discussed earlier in the context of Hodgson's ethnography of the Maasai, actors who operate outside the formal institutions of the state and beyond the control of dominant global financial entities (such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization) can use social media and social networking to build transnational activist networks and alliances. Through these mechanisms, their combined efforts address inequality, environmental degradation, and human rights abuses (Juris 2008; Juris and Khasnabish 2013; Nash 2005). Within the past several years, for example, social movements from India, Hong Kong, Brazil, and the United States have relied heavily on social media to challenge political, economic, and military systems of power. In the following sections, we consider two social movements: In the first, activists protest neoliberal economic policies and privatization in South Africa; in the second, Black Lives Matter protestors seek racial justice in the United States.

Freedom Songs and Social Movements in South Africa In the ethnography *You Can't Go to War without Song* (2022), Nigerian-born anthropologist Omotayo Jolaosho explores the role of singing, dance, and collective performance in South African social movements. Freedom songs and accompanying dances had played a central role in Black South Africans' decades-long struggle against

apartheid, a system of institutionalized racial oppression established in 1948 that had allowed the country to become dominated by a small White minority. Apartheid was formally abolished in 1991, and the first multiracial elections were held in 1994. Jolaosho's study, based on sixteen months of ethnographic research living with and learning from South African women in 2009–2010, focused on the Anti-Privatisation Forum (APF), a grassroots social movement founded in 2000 to address the country's unfinished transition, namely the government's turn to neoliberal economic policies and its abandonment of the country's poorest people after the 1994 democratic transition.

Over a ten-year period, the APF mobilized a coalition of political activists, students, unions, community residents, and community organizations in a grassroots struggle in Johannesburg and its surrounding townships to shape government policies. The group opposed widespread evictions of poor people and the privatization of public infrastructure, water, and sanitation services, which led to dramatic service cuts to already impoverished citizens. It employed collective research projects, community meetings, solidarity activities, and mass direct actions, including the performance of freedom songs, as central strategies in the movement.

The distinctive genre of freedom songs, usually performed with movement as part of rallies and demonstrations, included lyrics and music that expressed the aspirations and fighting spirit of the country's freedom fighters. Jolaosho argues that freedom songs and their collective performance in protests, marches, and demonstrations empower social movements on multiple levels. Their musical structure, their lyrical themes, and their affirmation of collective identity provide a disruptive critique of broader society while also creating an invigorating, shared sensory experience among marginalized participants. Freedom songs literally erupt into public space, shattering the perception that impoverished South Africans—who are too often hidden from the consciousness of more affluent people—are invisible and inaudible.

Amid broader social silence and exclusion, marginalized demonstrators must go to dramatic lengths to make their anger and injury plain. Their "repertoires of contention," as Jolaosho names them, may include dances, songs, marches, rallies, occupations of municipal buildings and state officials' homes, and road barricades—sometimes with burning tires. These embodied transgressions of the public calm are designed to demand attention and swift action to correct injustices.

Jolaosho notes that by bringing their bodies fully into the struggle—integrating movement, objects, sounds, and emotions—protestors connect their activism directly with poor South Africans' bodily needs for water, housing, sanitation, electricity, and safety. At the same time, Jolaosho documents the profound effects of freedom songs, dances, and marches on the protestors

themselves. The collective performances are invigorating and fortifying. They become an avenue for feeling and expressing deep emotions, especially when words fall short. The shared, embodied action helps marginalized demonstrators overcome their fear of police, of rubber bullets, of being shot, and of violence from counterdemonstrators. And they provide avenues for healing and catharsis. Jolaosho's rich ethnography and vibrant writing document the critical role of freedom songs and collective performances in mass mobilizations and social movements in South Africa and provide insights into similar repertoires of contention around the world (Jolaosho 2015, 2022).

Black Lives Matter Anthropologists seek to understand how social movements arise, mobilize, and sustain themselves. Even though conditions of inequality and injustice are widespread in many parts of the world, movements for social justice develop only in certain situations. Anthropologists have investigated the material, human, cognitive, technical, and organizational resources necessary for social movements to succeed (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996). Recent attention has turned to the **framing process** of movements—specifically, how shared meanings and definitions arise to motivate and justify collective action.

framing process: The creation of shared meanings and definitions that motivate and justify collective action by social movements.

Actions by the Movement for Black Lives over the past decade illustrate the role of the framing process. How did activists and protestors using the slogan "Black Lives Matter" capture the attention of a nation (and beyond) and build a consensus for social action? What factors led to their success? The hashtag #BlackLivesMatter was first used in 2013 after the acquittal of George Zimmerman in the 2012 murder of Black teenager Trayvon Martin. The Movement for Black Lives captured national attention in 2014 after the murder of another Black teenager, Michael Brown, by a White police officer in Ferguson, Missouri. In Ferguson, thousands gathered in the streets to protest Michael Brown's death and long-standing patterns of discriminatory policing against people of color in their community. The murder of George Floyd by police in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 2020 drew millions of people in hundreds of communities across the country and around the world to protest under the "Black Lives Matter" banner.

Anthropologist Jeffrey Juris (2012) suggests there are two keys to the success of contemporary social movements, both related to framing. First is the framing of the movement as simultaneously virtual and physical. And second is a framing of the movement's cause through compelling slogans. Social media draws a diverse group of people with shared concerns—in the case of the Movement for Black Lives, over racial justice—into shared physical spaces. Social media, email lists, websites, and collaborative networking tools facilitate new patterns of protest that build on and resonate with more traditional

forms of action. As Yarimar Bonilla and Jonathan Rosa (2015) document in their article about the Black Lives Matter protests in Ferguson, "#Ferguson: Digital Protest, Hashtag Ethnography, and the Racial Politics of Social Media in the United States," social media was key to keeping the physical outdoor protests and occupations alive, vibrant, and relevant. In the process, the physical occupations became not only a protest tactic but also the "physical and communal embodiments of the virtual crowds of individuals aggregated through the viral flows of social media" (Juris 2012, 269).

Another key to the success of the Movement for Black Lives rests on its framing under the banner of Black Lives Matter. The slogan is a statement of outrage and a demand for equality. The statement's sentiment should be obvious, yet the country's history and current events reveal that it has not been realized. Over the past decade, activists using the Black Lives Matter framing have successfully organized a broad, decentralized political and social movement to directly challenge state policies and to indirectly shape public political discourse in a number of areas, including police brutality and the use of excessive force against people of color, budget reallocation from policing to community services focused on mental health and housing, and injustice built into the criminal justice system, particularly sentencing disparities that feed mass incarceration.

The Movement for Black Lives has been so successful in framing these debates and shifting public discourse that countermovements have attempted to undermine its framing by emulating it. Phrases like "All Lives Matter" or "Blue Lives Matter" are sometimes used as counterslogans to insinuate that

In support of Black lives, people collectively gathered online and in the streets to protest racism and police brutality toward Black people.

Black Lives Matter is itself discriminatory in what should be a color-blind society. In response, Black Lives Matter activists continue to advance their framing by drawing attention to the many ways in which U.S. institutions and individuals have devalued Black lives over their 400-year history in the United States, up to and including today. In these ways, the Movement for Black Lives continues to use its framing to express outrage, demand justice, educate the public, and function as a laboratory for the production of alternative forms of democracy and community (Yancy and Butler 2015). Where have you heard this framing used in discussions about race, racism, and racial injustice?

Alternative Legal Structures

In addition to overt social movements and subtle, covert forms of resistance, it is possible to challenge structures of power in an arena where the state usually holds clear authority: in matters of the law. But how do people organize alternative legal structures outside direct control of the modern state? What gives authority and legitimacy to alternative structures if they are not enforceable by the state's coercive power? Legal anthropologist Hussein Ali Agrama spent two years conducting ethnographic research on local courts and councils in Cairo, Egypt, to explore these questions (Agrama 2010, 2012).

Islamic Fatwa Councils in Cairo, Egypt Agrama compared the operations of two key local sources of legal authority: (1) the personal status courts operated by the Egyptian state and (2) the Al-Azhar Fatwa Council, independently established in 1935 and one of the oldest and most established centers of Islamic authority. In the busy and crowded personal status courts, Egyptians of all walks of life appear before a judge, an official of the state, who makes legally binding rulings that draw on the Egyptian constitution and legal codes that are based on the principles of Islamic Sharia (law). In the equally busy and crowded Fatwa Council, held in a spacious room at the main entrance to the Al-Azhar mosque, seekers approach Islamic legal scholars and interpreters of Islamic law, or muftis, for religious answers about matters of daily life. The muftis respond freely with legally nonbinding answers to anyone who asks. Their decisions are called *fatwas*—responses to questions about how to live ethically and rightly.

MAP 14.6
Cairo

In comparing these two court systems, Agrama encounters a startling dynamic. Both deal with an overlapping set of issues heavily focused on matters of marriage, sex, divorce, reconciliation, and inheritance. Both draw their decisions from Islamic Sharia, although the personal status courts engage Islamic law through the Egyptian constitution and legal code, whereas the muftis refer directly to Sharia and other Islamic traditions in their fatwas. What interests Agrama is that despite these basic similarities, the petitioners' responses to the

authorities' rulings are markedly different. The legally binding judgments of the personal status court are generally looked on with great suspicion. People go to great lengths to avoid the consequences of the court's decisions despite the state's ability to coerce obedience to its judgments. In distinct contrast, the Fatwa Council exercises great authority, even though seeking decisions from the council is not obligatory, a fatwa is not legally binding, and once issued, a fatwa does not have to be obeyed. In fact, petitioners can seek more than one fatwa on the same issue if they wish. But Agrama's research finds that petitioners take fatwas very seriously, following the decisions even if they entail great difficulty or unhappiness—despite no identifiable institutional enforcement mechanism.

What accounts for the differentiation between personal status courts and the Fatwa Council? And how does a given fatwa acquire its authority without the threat of coercive force? To understand the authority of the fatwa, Agrama explores the complex interactions and expectations between seekers of fatwas and the muftis that issue them. Contrary to popular impressions, fatwas are not merely designed to dispense points of correct doctrine in obedience to prescriptions found in Islamic Sharia. Rather, muftis seek to apply Islamic tradition and law to resolve particular problems, identify an effective solution, and point fatwa seekers toward a path forward. The process includes significant perplexities and uncertainties: The fatwa seeker arrives perplexed by their life situation, and at least initially, the mufti is uncertain about how to respond. In this context, the mufti typically begins by asking for further information in an

Fatwa Council at the Al Azhar mosque, Cairo, Egypt.

attempt to fully understand the context and facts as presented. The fatwa seeker approaches the mufti with the hope that they will have the skills to point the way out of the trouble, to offer a way forward—to discern and speak the right words.

In the end, both seeker and mufti share a collective responsibility for the success of the fatwa: The mufti must be sure to speak the right words, and the seeker must apply them correctly. Although the consequences of an incorrect fatwa may be most damaging for the seeker during their lifetime, the mufti is believed to bear responsibility for the outcome in the hereafter. Ultimately, the fatwa is meant to put the questioner on the right path forward, to offer direction and facilitate a journey on which the seeker can advance within the range of doctrine toward a Muslim ideal. Agrama suggests that it is careful and personal navigation of these complexities that engenders trust and conveys legitimacy on the muftis and their fatwas.

Despite the overarching presence of the state (Ferguson and Gupta 2002) and, in this case, the explicit presence of a state-run court, individuals and communities consistently seek alternative frameworks of authority through which to organize their lives. Agrama's study of the bustling Al-Azhar Fatwa Council in Cairo provides one compelling example and sheds light on local practices of the fatwa—practices that are increasingly popular within Egyptian society and the Muslim world more generally yet are frequently misunderstood in the West.

In this chapter's opening story of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, as well as in the ethnographic examples presented throughout this chapter, we have seen diverse strategies that humans use to exercise power through the medium of politics. Although war in Ukraine and political upheaval in the Middle East and various parts of the world readily draw the focus of the world media, Agrama's work in Cairo reminds us that human political activity occurs at many different levels during the course of daily life. Whether through the politics of the state, acts of war, social movements, or small-scale acts of resistance that James Scott (1985; see Chapter 2) labeled weapons of the weak, we have considered how anthropologists examine power and politics and the cutting edges of political activism that will continue to draw their interest in the future.

Thinking Like an Anthropologist: Applying Politics to Daily Life and Beyond

In each chapter of this book, we have investigated how human cultures construct, engage, and negotiate systems of power. We have considered the role of influential ideologies and structures of race, gender, ethnicity, class, kinship, and religion. In this chapter, we have explored how power is expressed and organized through political systems and processes. All human relationships and communities, large and small, involve politics. People are constantly negotiating the interpersonal and institutional balances of power.

Politics is not separate from daily life. We don't have to run for political office or start an online petition to be involved in politics. At its most basic level, politics encompasses all of the ways we organize ourselves to achieve what we most desire for our community: our family, friends, classmates, fellow citizens, the environment, and fellow inhabitants of planet Earth. As you learn to think like an anthropologist about politics and power, remember the opening questions that we have used to frame our inquiries:

- How have anthropologists viewed the origins of human political history?
- What is the state?
- How is globalization affecting the state?
- What are the relationships among politics, the state, violence, and war?
- How do people mobilize power outside the state's control?

If, as it appears, humans do not have an overwhelming and uncontrollable biological drive toward aggression and violence, then unlimited avenues open up to explore strategies for addressing problems that confront us today. These strategies include cooperatively engaging the challenging issues of our schools, communities, nations, and world and developing political responses that account for the unique cultural dynamics of local communities and specific groups.

As we have discussed, in this era of globalization, local political action can have global implications. Certainly, the challenge of climate change, discussed in Chapter 12, creates opportunities for political action on a local scale that can affect our planetary co-inhabitants on a global scale. Likewise, there are no climate-endangering activities anywhere in the world that do not directly affect all of the humans and other species on the planet. But what political strategies can be mobilized to bring a broad range of actors—activists, investors, civil society groups, and governments—into a collaborative movement with common strategies to address this existential challenge?

As a new generation of young people around the globe develop social networking and social media strategies for expressing their concerns and attempting to influence systems of power and politics, the networked nature of these movements also means that you, as a college student, have every possibility of becoming an anthropologist who engages the world.

Key Terms

band (p. 528)
tribe (p. 531)
chiefdom (p. 531)
state (p. 534)
hegemony (p. 537)
civil society organization (p. 539)
militarization (p. 545)
agency (p. 556)
social movement (p. 556)
framing process (p. 559)

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